

CLAIMS

1. A wine barrel comprising:

a rigid barrel frame having upper and lower substantially identical rigid ends and a plurality of rigid longitudinal connecting means for connecting said rigid ends;

a plurality of wooden side panels secured to said connecting means and extending circumferentially within said frame;

said upper and lower rigid ends include wooden end panels mounted between said rigid ends and said connecting means whereby upon assembly of said frame, said side panels, and said end panels, there is provided a substantially leak-proof barrel having a substantially wooden interior surface.

2. The wine barrel of claim 1 wherein said rigid barrel frame provides sufficient strength to support external stacking loads and internal liquid pressure.

3. The wine barrel of claim 1 wherein said connecting means are straight multisided rods of material non-reactive to wine.

4. The wine barrel of claim 1 wherein said connecting means are straight circular tubes of material non-reactive to wine.

5. The wine barrel of claim assembly of claim 1 wherein said side panels and said end panels are generally planar and replaceable including reversible replacement to present the unused side to the interior of said barrel.

6. The wine barrel of claim 1 wherein said rigid ends are circular rings and said frame is reusable for replacement of said side panels and said end panels.

7. The wine barrel of claim 1 wherein said rigid ends have a multisided configuration and said frame is reusable for replacement of said side panels and said end panels.

8. The wine barrel of claim 5 wherein said side panels are complementary and at least one of said side panels is wedge shaped effecting side pressure to adjacent panels during assembly to produce a liquid tight barrel.

9. The wine barrel of claim 5 wherein said side panels have grooves in the ends thereof for accepting gaskets positioned between said end panels and said side panels.

10. A wine barrel comprising:

a pair of substantially identical generally circular end rings and a plurality of longitudinal connecting means connected to form a rigid frame;

said end rings including means for capturing and interchangeably securing end wood panels;

said connecting means including means for interchangeably capturing and securing side wood panels circumferentially of said frame;

assembly of said rings including said end panels, and said connecting means including said side panels provides a liquid tight container with a substantially wooden interior; and

wherein said end panels and said side panels are substantially planar and selectively replaceable within said rigid frame.

11. The wine barrel of claim 10 wherein said side panels are complementary and at least one of said side panels is wedge shaped providing side pressure to adjacent panels during installation to effect a liquid tight barrel.

12. The wine barrel of claim assembly of claim 10 wherein said side and end panels are replaceable including reversible replacement to present the unused side to the interior of said barrel.

13. The wine barrel of claim 10 including gasket means interposed between said end wood panels and said side panels.

14. The wine barrel of claim 1 wherein said connecting means are straight multisided rods of material non-reactive to wine.

15. The wine barrel of claim 1 wherein said connecting means are straight circular tubes of material non-reactive to wine.

16. A wine barrel comprising:

a pair of generally ring-like ends and a plurality of longitudinally extending connecting means for assembling said ends to form a rigid reuseable frame;

planar wooden side panels circumferentially interposed between said connecting means;

planar wooden end panels positioned under said ring-like ends;

gasket means positioned between said end panels and said side panels; and

hardware means for assembling said frame, said end panels, said gasket, and said side panels to form a substantially liquid tight barrel.

17. The wine barrel of claim 16 wherein said connecting means are straight multisided rods of material non-reactive to wine.

18. The wine barrel of claim 16 wherein said connecting means are straight circular tubes of material non-reactive to wine.

19. The wine barrel of claim 16 wherein said side panels are complementary and at least one of said side panels is wedge shaped providing side pressure to adjacent panels during installation to effect a liquid tight barrel.

20. The wine barrel of claim assembly of claim 16 wherein said side panels and said end panels are replaceable in said reusable frame and can be reversibly replaced to present the unused side to the interior of said barrel.